

Providence City Plan Commission

January 21, 2025



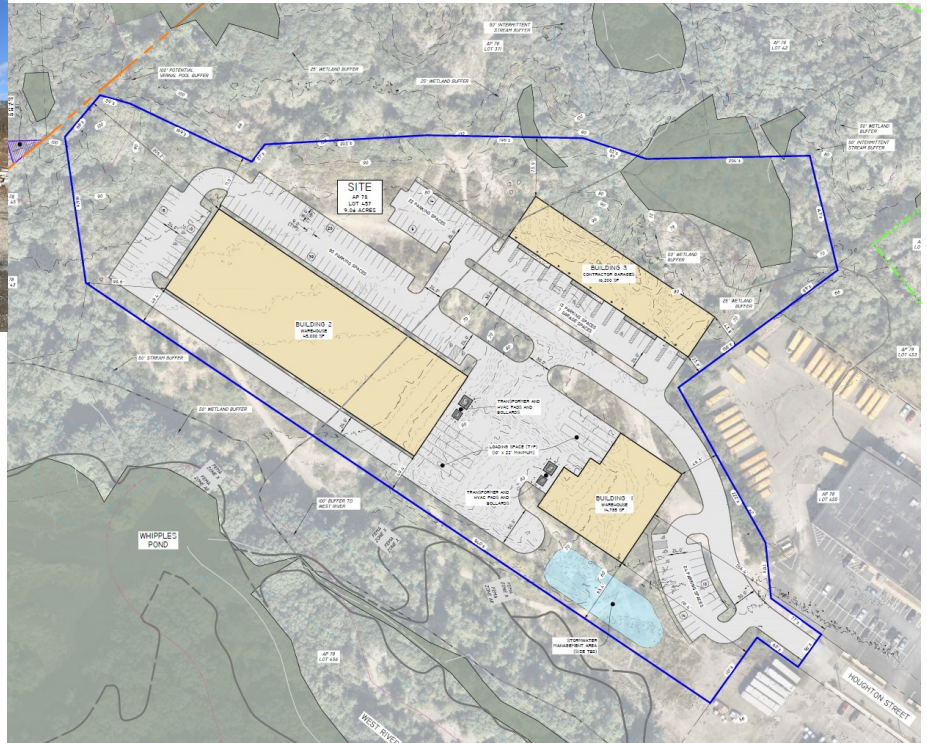
AGENDA ITEM 1 ■ 70 HOUGHTON STREET



View from Houghton Street



Aerial view of the site



Proposed site plan

OVERVIEW

OWNER/ APPLICANT:	Providence Redevelopment Agency, Owner	PROJECT DESCRIPTION:	The applicant is proposing to construct three commercial multi-purpose buildings and associated infrastructure on the vacant subject lot in the M-MU 75 zone. The applicant is requesting master plan approval and is seeking waivers from the height calculation from average grade, and elevations and renderings of the buildings.
	College Hill Development LLC, Applicant		
CASE NO./ PROJECT TYPE:	24-069 MA Master Plan	RECOMMENDATION:	Approval of the Master Plan subject to the noted findings
PROJECT LOCATION:	70 Houghton Street M-MU 75 zoning district AP 78 Lot 457		
NEIGHBORHOOD:	Wanskuck		
		PROJECT PLANNER:	Choyon Manjrekar



Renderings of the site

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The applicant is proposing to construct three commercial buildings with areas of 14,785 SF (Building 1), 45,000 SF (Building 2) and 16,200 SF (Building 3) on a vacant lot in the M-MU 75 zone. Building 3 is proposed for use as a contractor garage for equipment storage and access. Buildings two and three are designated as warehouses that will be programmed with uses permitted in the M-MU 75 zone. Associated improvements like parking, lighting and drainage will also be provided. The applicant is requesting waivers from submission of the height calculation, elevations and renderings of the proposed buildings at the master plan stage.

ANALYSIS AND IDENTIFICATION OF POTENTIAL ISSUES

Use

The property is zoned M-MU 75, where the proposed uses of a contractor's warehouse and general

commercial uses are allowed by right. Per the applicant, the warehouses may be broken up to contain different uses permitted in the zone.

Dimensions and site design

The site will be accessed from a drive originating on Houghton Street which will provide access to the parking area and each of the three buildings.

The applicant has requested waivers from submission of the height calculation, elevations and renderings of the buildings, but provided images of industrial buildings that the development will be modeled on. Based on the images, the building exteriors will employ corrugated metal, composite, and glass with heights well within the 75' height limit of the zone. It is the DPD's recommendation that the southeast facing façade be designed to appeal to the surrounding neighborhood and visitors.

Landscaping

The area of the site is estimated to be 9 acres (394,879 SF) which requires approximately 58,900 SF of canopy coverage. The area around the site is heavily wooded with numerous trees that the applicant is proposing to count toward the canopy coverage requirement.

Per the landscaping plan, internal plantings will be made within, and around the perimeter of the parking area. Approximately 82,500 SF of canopy coverage is proposed. It appears that the applicant will meet the requirement using a combination of existing coverage and proposed plantings. A detailed landscaping plan will be provided at the preliminary plan stage.

Environmental management

Erosion control, drainage, and site maintenance plans are required at the preliminary plan stage.

Parking and Traffic

The warehouse uses require one space per 20,000 SF of GFA and the contractor storage yard requires one per 500 SF of office use. Approximately four spaces will be required and the applicant will meet the parking requirement by providing 142 spaces.

The City Engineer required that the applicant provide a traffic impact study that examines the effects of large vehicles like tractor trailers with a focus on the turning radius that can be accommodated at the corner of Veazie Street and Branch Ave.

Submission waivers

The applicant has requested waivers from submission of the height calculation, elevations and renderings of the proposed buildings. Currently, the site is unevenly graded and overgrown with vegetation. Per the applicant, these conditions make it difficult to calculate building height and determine an appropriate design. It is the DPD's opinion that the CPC should grant the requested waiver, finding that it would be in the interest of good planning practice as it would allow the applicant to develop appropriate plans for the site. As discussed, the buildings are expected to be less than 75'. The waived items shall be submitted at the preliminary plan stage.

FINDINGS

Section 1005 of the Commission's *Development Review Regulations* requires that the City Plan Commission make the following findings as part of their approval of all land development project applications. Based on the analysis contained herein and subject to the conditions contained in this report, staff has prepared the following findings regarding the request for approval of the master plan stage:

1. *Consistency—The proposed development is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and/or has satisfactorily addressed the issues where there may be inconsistencies.*

The subject property is located in an area that the future land use map of the Providence Comprehensive Plan intends for Business/Mixed Use development. The plan describes this area as one intended to foster growth of commercial and industrial uses. The development will conform to this land use designation.

2. *Compliance with Zoning Ordinance—The proposed development is in compliance with the standards and provisions of the Zoning Ordinance.*

Use: Industrial-general and commercial uses are permitted by right in the M-MU 75 zone.

Dimension: The development will conform to the dimensional and design requirements of the M-MU 75 zone. The building height calculations, renderings and elevations will be submitted at the preliminary plan stage.

Parking: The applicant will meet the parking requirement.

Landscaping: A conceptual landscaping plan showing conformance with the canopy coverage requirement has been provided. The detailed landscaping plan at the preliminary plan stage shall provide more information on the tree species and a breakdown of canopy coverage.

Lighting: A lighting plan is required at the preliminary plan stage.

3. *Environmental Impact—There will be no significant environmental impacts from the proposed development as shown on the final plan, with all required conditions for approval.*

No negative environmental impacts are expected as the applicant is expected to come into conformance with applicable environmental regulations.

4. *Buildable Lot—The subdivision or development project, as proposed, will not result in the creation of individual lots with such physical constraints to development that building on those lots according to pertinent regulations and building standards would be impracticable.*

There are no physical constraints that impact development of this property, as the lot complies with the dimensional requirements of the M-MU 75 zone.

5. *Street Access—All proposed development projects and all subdivision lots shall have adequate and permanent physical access to a public street. Lot frontage on a public street without physical access shall not be considered compliance with this requirement.*

Adequate vehicular and pedestrian access will be provided from Houghton Street.

RECOMMENDATION—Waivers

Based on the foregoing discussion, the DPD recommends that the CPC vote to grant the waivers from submission of the height calculation, building elevations and renderings subject to the applicant submitting the items at the preliminary plan stage.

RECOMMENDATION—Master Plan

Based on the foregoing discussion, the DPD recommends that the CPC vote to approve the master plan subject to the following conditions:

1. The applicant shall provide more details on the design of the southeastern façade at the preliminary plan stage.
2. A traffic impact study that accounts for the turning radii of large vehicles shall be submitted with the preliminary plan.